

THE ORATIONS OF PHILIP DIVERSI IN HONOUR OF THE HUNGARIAN KINGS SIGISMUND OF LUXEMBURG AND ALBERT OF HAPSBURG: REALITY AND RHETORIC IN HUMANISM

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ABSTRACT: The orations that Philip Diversi delivered in honour of the Hungarian kings Sigismund of Luxemburg and Albert of Hapsburg shed more light on the style, tastes, literature, and customs of his day than on the lives and accomplishments of the two royal heads. Through communicational codes of a literary genre closely connected to the real world we are able to study human relationships, attitudes, values, interests, and the cultural and social context of the time. Diversi's discourses thus contribute to the post-modern rethinking of language, history, and the scope of human knowledge. Rhetoric and discourse, in an ever new dialogue with the past, promote themselves as genuine historical sources, with the answers lying in both the contents and the form.

Humanistic orations today

What do the orations delivered in Dubrovnik Cathedral five centuries ago reveal about the life they were conceived in? Are they to be credited with historical value and genre distinction only, or do they harbour answers about an era that no other source is able to provide? An inquisitive mind

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will undoubtedly trace an interesting story behind any source, and that goes for those three, fleetingly irrelevant and exemplary rhetorical compositions. True, they do not furnish explicit information about the political accomplishments of the two kings, but their densely woven fabric reflects much about the way of life, tastes, literature, and manners of the day. The discourses disclose the subtle social and personal relations, attitudes, human values, interests, and the preoccupations of Dubrovnik society and their author, the Ragusan grammar master, a scholar of ordinary merit, Philip Diversi. Speech as a medium is pregnant with meaning, particularly today, when we show equal concern for the relationship between rhetoric and reality. Thus it is a pity that public speech, albeit the epitome of the rhetorical tenets of humanism, has been unjustly neglected by both Croatian historiography and literary history.¹ Communication among the humanists, private or public, was rendered through books, epistles, epigrams, and orations. It was through these media, closely linked with reality and the humanistic concept of fame, that the humanists deliberated on diverse themes, interesting or vexing, thus influencing public opinion. That is why these forms contribute significantly to our knowledge of the social and cultural features of the period, irrespective of the literary value some of them have. No doubt, the humanistic rhetoric will not appeal to present-day readers. Originally effective, however, rhetorical devices and effective figures of speech prove counterproductive with the modern readership. Meticulously patterned after the classical models, the orations were amply embellished with ornamentations to meet the taste of the humanistic speakers and their audience. Today's readership will certainly find these compositions artificial and devoid of genuine feeling. But the difference in the reception means that, apart from reflecting their own time and values, they also mirror our time and its aesthetic codes. It is a challenging experience to be able to understand the aesthetic and communicational codes of a materially and spiritually colourful and turbulent age, particularly in terms of the humanistic problems of the relatedness of content and form, the central issue of today's rethinking of the humanistic disciplines. A parallel

¹ The only exception is the so-called anti-Turkish addresses, by means of which the Croatian humanists, state and church dignitaries, appealed to the broader European public for help against the Ottoman menace. Discourses of the kind are known to have been a popular genre at the turn of the fifteenth century in both Croatia and Europe. See: *Govori protiv Turaka*, ed. Vedran Gligo. Split: Logos, 1983: pp. 16-24; Tomislav Raukar, *Hrvatsko srednjovjekovlje: prostor, ljudi, ideje*. Zagreb: Školska knjiga, 1997: pp. 476-495.

may be drawn between the aesthetic, epistemological, and communicational features of the most popular genres of the day, including orations, and the current rethinking of rhetoric. Certain lasting ideas and attitudes of the Western mind are traceable to humanism, as they were to set the basis of modern social mainstreams. These values, however, offered other possibilities as well. Thus, in pursuit of the answers to the newly posed questions, the rethinking of language, history, and knowledge inescapably leads to the humanistic starting point. The contemporary assessment of humanistic discourse is part of an indispensable search for a new framework for the humanistic discourse of our own day. Setting aside the modernistic idea of discontinuous progress, our age again is in quest of memory and of awareness of continuity, giving rise to reconsideration of the humanistic and modernistic heritage in order to incorporate it into a new mental frame.

Philip Diversi in Dubrovnik

Philip Diversi (Philippus de Diversis) was born in Lucca and, according to his own statement, was of noble birth. The Diversi family rose to wealth after the fall of the Pisa government and the establishment of the Republic in 1368. His grandfather, Niccolò Diversi, sat on the Council of the Twelve which, together with the old nobility, were to establish the government. *Anziani*, or the old nobility, among whom were the members of the Quartigiani family which Philip's mother belonged to, opposed the reforms. It is difficult to believe that such a family would marry down and accept a non-noble, moreover a liberal, into the family. It isn't likely that the Quartigiani patrician family became acquainted with the Diversi in these early years. The misalliance may have taken place later, when the Republic was under the tyrannical rule of the Guinigi. The Quartigianis lost the access to high political positions and were not given these privileges back until 1430. Following the internal factions stirred by the former gonfalonier Paolo Guinigi in 1400, both families found themselves in exile, a situation which may have contributed to the less strict observance of marriage customs.² In the light of his own interpretation

² Ivan Božić, »Dve beleške o Filipu de Diversisu«, *Zbornik Filozofskog fakulteta u Beogradu* 11/1 (1970): pp. 318-329; Vitaliano Brunelli, »Introduzione«, in: »Philippi de Diversis Situs aedificorum politiae et laudabilium consuetudinum inclytae civitatis Ragusii ad ipsum senatum descriptio«, *Programma dell'I.R. Ginnasio Superiore in Zara* 23 (1879-80): p. 3; Denys Hay, *Europe in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries*. London-New York: Longman, 1989: p. 176; Michael E. Bratchel, *Lucca 1430-1494: The Reconstruction of an Italian Republic*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995: p. 32.

of family origin, one may be intrigued by Diversi's hostile attitude towards intermarriage, as described in *Situs aedificiorum*, in which he highly praises the Ragusan patricians for their determination to refuse to mix their noble blood with that of the plebeians.³ The banished Diversi-Quartigiani family settled in Venice where Philip probably attended school. The earliest record of him dates from 1421, when he was a master in St. Paul's sextry in Venice. His name bore the honorific *Ser*, confirming that he enjoyed patrician reputation in Venetian circles. In 1434 he left Venice for Dubrovnik. Ragusan envoys who had come to Venice in search of a master offered him a well-paid position. He assumed the office of school headmaster in Dubrovnik, contrary to the benevolent counsels of his friends who advised him not to leave the "flourishing city of Venice".⁴ In addition to the covered accommodation expenses, he received a payment of 450 to 540 perpers per year. The salary reduction in 1440 triggered his discontent with the patricians. Lamenting over his fate, he felt that he could not prosper "*in dies de virtute in virtutem et de divitiis in divitias*".⁵ His recurrent complaints about the pay and lack of assistants, along with long leaves in Venice, spurred the Major Council to look for a new master in 1441.⁶ The praise and flattery expressed in his work *Situs aedificiorum politiae et laudabilium consuetudinum inclitae civitatis Ragusii* written in 1440 had no effect on the patricians' animosity towards Diversi. So, his statement that he wishes to end his life and career in Dubrovnik sounds unconvincing.⁷ Scholars disagree about the exact date of Diversi's departure from Dubrovnik and his next residence - Lucca or Venice. Contrary to some assumptions, it is certain that by 1444 Diversi was no longer in Dubrovnik because the Major Council had already sent envoys to Venice to look for a new master, being strictly instructed to exclude

³ Filip de Diversis, *Opis slavnoga grada Dubrovnika iz 1440. godine. (Philippi de Diversis de Quartigianis Lucensis artium doctoris eximii et oratoris Situs aedificiorum, politiae et laudabilium consuetudinum inclitae civitatis Ragusii)*, ed. Zdenka Janeković Römer. Zagreb: Dom i svijet, 2004, f. 157; Zdenka Janeković Römer, *Okvir slobode*. Zagreb-Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU, 1999: pp. 69-70.

⁴ F. de Diversis, *Opis slavnoga grada Dubrovnika*, f. 132.

⁵ State Archives of Dubrovnik (hereafter cited as: SAD), *Lettere di Levante*, ser. 27.1, vol. 11, ff. 143v, 177v; *Acta Consilii Maioris*, ser. 8, vol. 5, ff. 76v, 82r, 207r; vol. 6, f. 46r; V. Brunelli, »Introduzione«: p. 4.

⁶ Ivo Perić, »Filip de Diversis kao nastavnik i upravitelj gramatičko-retoričke škole u Dubrovniku«. *Anali za povijest odgoja* 1 (1992): pp. 5-12; Ivan Božić, »Filip de Diversis i njegovo djelo«. *Dubrovnik* 17/3 (1973): p. 77.

⁷ F. de Diversis, *Opis slavnoga grada Dubrovnika*, f. 4.

Diversi from the list of potential candidates.⁸ There is evidence that in 1441 Diversi was offered a master's post in Lucca where he was to teach grammar, rhetoric, and philosophy for a year and receive a payment of 1,000 florins plus the students' tokens. For reasons unknown, the whimsical Italian did not return to his birthplace but resumed the commission in Venice. The conclusion of his manuscript *Situs aedificiorum* contains the transcript of a letter he sent to Lucca by the end of 1444, from which one may gather that his return home was conditioned by the return of property sequestered during the tyranny and by the return of his entire family.⁹ His request was not granted and he remained in Venice, working as a schoolmaster in 1447. In 1452, attracted by considerable pay, he applied for the office of chancellor in Koroni, a Venetian fort in Greece.¹⁰

Paradoxically, Diversi is best remembered for his Dubrovnik episode, although this was both a frustrating experience for him and ultimately a failure. Thanks to the contradictory reasons that urged him to write a laudation of the city that displeased him so, he has earned a place in the history of humanism. Apart from *Situs aedificiorum*, *politiae et laudabilium consuetudinum inclytæ civitatis Ragusii* (*Description of the buildings, political administration and commendable customs of the City of Dubrovnik*), his preserved opus

⁸ *Acta Consilii Maioris*, vol. 6, f. 135r; vol. 7, f. 157r; V. Brunelli, »Introduzione«: p. 4; I. Božić, »Filip de Diversis i njegovu djelo«: p. 77.

⁹ SAD, Legacy of Ivan Bizzaro, *Situs aedificiorum, politiae et laudabilium consuetudinum inclytæ civitatis Ragusii*, uncatalogued: pp. 260-262.

Copia meae supplicationis

Illustribus et excelsis dominis Lucensibus cum humili et digna recommendatione humillime supplicat et supplex exponit Lucanus ciuis fidelis utrique Philippus de Diuersis de Quartigianis ortus quippe proauo Ioanne auo Nicolao et patre Joanne qui omnes suis temporibus amore libertatis Lucanae exularunt ab iniquis eius respublicae Tirannis et occupatoribus ac rerum grauissima passi sunt usque ad inopiam damna quod cedem illustres et excelsæ dominationes quae in hoc potissimum uigilant ut hii Guinisorum perfidia longis temporibus errarunt patriae dulcedinem degustare ualeant. Dignentur ipsi supplicanti iusto Senatus decreto restituere ea bona suorum olim antecessorum quae Paulus Tirannus alienauit ut aliquando facilius sibi pateat in patriam reditus. Is enim dum modus familiam cum honore mediocri nutriendi offeratur stabilis ardenti animo Luccam amantissimam ei patriam paratus est repetere ibique uiuere pacifice et ossa sepulcro recondere. Clareat igitur illustrissimi domini uestra benignitas ut hunc ciuem cum magna familia utriusque sexus ciuitas Lucana gratissime recipiat cui Deus suauissimam et perpetuam concedere dignetur libertatem et animorum ueram concordiam et unionem.

Data Venetiis die VIII Decembris MCCCCXLIII.

Philippus de Diuersis artium doctor (transcription by Gordan Ravančić).

¹⁰ I. Božić, »Filip de Diversis i njegovu djelo«: pp. 78-79.

also includes three solemn orations on the Hungarian kings Sigismund and Albert.

Early humanistic education in Dubrovnik

In the best interests of its citizens, the Ragusan government placed special emphasis on the development of schools open to the public. The first record related to a public city school dates from 1333, in which *magister gramaticus* Nicola of Verona taught the basics of Latin and arithmetic.¹¹ Fourteenth-century council records mention other grammar masters who taught students "after Donatus".¹² The manual in question was *Ars grammatica minor* by Aelius Donatus, a fourth-century Latin grammarian and the teacher of St. Jerome and Servius. This grammar on the eight parts of speech was intended for beginners and was so popular that the author's name in the form *donat* came to mean "grammar" or "lesson". The more advanced courses used Donatus's *Ars maior*, and *Institutiones grammaticae* by Priscianus Caesariensis, neither of which can be traced in the Dubrovnik sources. There is evidence, however, of a number of grammar books which appeared later and which were under the influence of Donatus and Priscian of Mauretania.¹³ These manuals became the standard works for the teaching of grammar in the medieval schools and remained in use throughout the period.

No doubt, the male population of Dubrovnik was literate and had some elementary knowledge of Latin and grammar. This proved sufficient for many, particularly those preparing to go into business. The decision of the Major Council dated 29 January 1435, makes a clear distinction between two kinds of students: those whose ambition rested on the elementary level, the basics of which would meet the requirements of their everyday business routine (business correspondence, arithmetic, and bookkeeping), and the

¹¹ *Monumenta Ragusina. Libri reformationum*, vol. 5, ed. Josip Gelcich. [*Monumenta spectantia historiam Slavorum Meridionalium*, vol. 29]. Zagreb: JAZU, 1897: p. 38; Ignacij Voje, »Vplivi Italije na šolstvo in s tem povezan kulturni razvoj v Dalmaciji ter v Dubrovniku v srednjem veku«. *Zgodovinski časopis* 37/3 (1983): p. 204.

¹² *Monumenta Ragusina. Libri reformationum*, vol. 2, ed. Josip Gelcich. [*Monumenta spectantia historiam Slavorum Meridionalium*, vol. 13]. Zagreb: JAZU, 1882: pp. 52, 259; Ivan Božić, »Pojava humanizma u Dubrovniku« *Istoriski pregled* 2/1 (1955): p. 9; Franjo Rački, »Prilozi za poviest humanisma i renaissance u Dubrovniku, Dalmaciji i Hrvatskoj«. *Rad JAZU* 74 (1885): pp. 168-169.

¹³ Vladimir Vratović, »Rimska književnost«, in: *Povijest svjetske književnosti*, vol. 2. Zagreb: Mladost, 1977: p. 293; Stjepan Hosu, »Srednjovjekovna latinska književnost«, *ibidem*: p. 348.

others in pursuit of a more comprehensive approach to grammar and other arts.¹⁴ The fifteenth century also witnessed private contracts in which fathers required their sons to be given lessons in “*litteras latinas mercatorum*”.¹⁵ But the new era introduced new spiritual and material values. The rapid accumulation of wealth of the Ragusan patricians and later the commoners proved fertile ground for the spiritual conversion of the city. *Litterae mercatoriae* no longer answered the needs of the new urban population. Merchants, too, craved for greater knowledge, attaching prime importance to excellence in Latin and rhetoric skill. Also, they accepted the humanistic virtues of knowledge, love, and beauty, and invested in their beliefs as organizers and sponsors of humanism. Benedikt Kotruljević, a Ragusan merchant and envoy of the Aragon king, strongly argued against “the impudence of those who think that a merchant need not master Latin, rhetoric, or literature”. He even ridiculed the merchants who showed no effort to acquire new skills. He believed that the merchants, apart from commercial skills, arithmetic, reading, and the Christian Commandments, were to have full excellence in both speaking and writing Latin in order to make successful business deals, communicate with foreigners and men of prominence, and understand the ways of the Christian faith. Moreover, determined to raise his daughters “as intelligent and learned young women”, he had them taught grammar, rhetoric, and literature despite general public disapproval.¹⁶ In order to answer the new needs, in 1433 the Ragusan councillors introduced the second school level to be carried out by the humanistic scholars. Thus, in addition to pragmatic and simple commercial training, Dubrovnik witnessed the founding of the first grammar school in which the arts of the trivium were studied. In 1435 Philip Diversi was appointed rector, his personal ambitions being only partly fulfilled. His first day at school proved a disappointment, for he came to teach boys and young men “sciences and urbanity, both of which they seemed to have an apparent need of”.¹⁷ Diversi’s

¹⁴ *Acta Consilii Maioris*, vol. 5, ff. 19r-20r; Ivo Perić, »Dva reformna zahvata u školovanju dubrovačke omladine«, *Pedagoški rad* 22 (1967): pp. 220-221.

¹⁵ SAD, *Diversa notariae*, ser. 26, vol. 12, f. 181r. On the literacy of merchants and their business books see: Ignacij Voje, »Privatne poslovne knjige dubrovniških trgovcev (XIV. stoletje)«, *Zgodovinski časopis* 34/1-2 (1957): pp. 77-85.

¹⁶ Benedikt Kotruljević, *O trgovini i savršenom trgovcu*. Dubrovnik: DTS, 1989: pp. 93, 313-319, 325, 419.

¹⁷ F. de Diversis, *Opis slavnoga grada Dubrovnika*: f. 38.

comment may be understood as a reflection of how things were, but on the other hand, it could also be an expression of his personal dissatisfaction with his reception in Dubrovnik. There is no reliable evidence on how the courses were organized, for neither Diversi nor other sources provide details on the programme. In view of his own education, Diversi's interest in scholarship included rhetoric, Latin, and philosophy, leading us to assume that they were given prime importance in the school curriculum. We cannot say with exactitude, however, whether he introduced a course in poetry and ethics, following the new principles of *studia humanitatis*.¹⁸

The humanists in Italy and elsewhere in Europe not only revised the medieval manuals but also the system, the methodology, and the objective of teaching. Old grammar books were replaced with the classical sources, which thus became the basis of humanistic education. New texts and new teaching methods did not penetrate the system easily, and in the sixteenth century universities were still traditional, while lower schools were even more so. That is where Italy led the way. At the time of Diversi's stay in Dubrovnik, humanistic schools had already been founded in Italy. But new winds brought fresh ideas into the classrooms of Dubrovnik as well, though not violent enough to sweep away the out-dated grammar books from which the students still learned passages by heart.¹⁹ Yet, many outstanding humanists who headed the school after Diversi introduced humanistic literary studies and Greek into the programme. Xenophon Filelfo, Tideo Acciarini, Bartolo Sfondrati, Daniele Clari, Jerome Calvo from Vicenza, seemingly even Demetrius Chakokondylos and many others, connected Dubrovnik with the famous centres of humanism and influenced the development of a whole generation of Dubrovnik poets, from Carolus de Pozza (Pucić) and Jacobus de Bona (Bunić) to Elias (Ilija) and Ludovicus de Crieva (Crijević) and many others. At the close of the fifteenth century, the renowned printer Aldo Manuzio dedicated an edition of Aristophanes and old Christian poets to the Ragusan master, later chancellor, Daniele Clari of Parma, deeply convinced

¹⁸ F. de Diversis, *Opis slavnoga grada Dubrovnika*: ff. 3, 7. On *studia humanitatis* see: Darko Novaković, »Latinsko pjesništvo hrvatskoga humanizma«, in: *Marko Marulić - Hrvatski latinisti*. Zagreb: Školska knjiga, 1994: pp. 56-57.

¹⁹ Compare John Rigby Hale, *The Renaissance Europe 1480-1520*. London: Blackwell Publishers, 1985: pp. 284-290; Peter Burke, »The Spread of Italian Humanism«, in: *The Impact of Humanism on Western Europe*, ed. Anthony Goodman and Angus MacKay. London-New York: Longman, 1990: pp. 12-14.

that his students would benefit considerably from them.²⁰ The Ragusan government made certain that their city always hosted at least one famous humanist, as cited in the transactions of the Major Council, "... *Italus et sciencia, virtutibus, moribusque ornatus...*"²¹

Yet it seems that the seven arts of the trivium and the quadrivium had not been taught before 1557, when the school curriculum was strictly decreed by the *Consilium rogatorum*.²² The reason for such a long delay lay in the fact that the councillors and the students' parents had considerable influence on the programme. From their perspective, school was to train young students to govern the Republic, and so they insisted on a programme which included pragmatic skills and civil virtues. Even the training necessary for public service was shortened to meet their needs. As the patricians rarely studied abroad, the pragmatic government tended to organize special public lectures in law, according to Venetian practice. The government sought ways to organize different concise courses. There is evidence that during his visit to Dubrovnik, Juraj Dragišić (Georgius Benignus), a Franciscan theologian, gave a series of lectures on the nature of angels which eventually served as a basis for his work *De natura caelestium spiritum*.²³ This leads us to assume that the spoken word was attributed greater significance in Dubrovnik than elsewhere. Public discourses, whose prime concern was not to transmit knowledge, proved equally informational.

The first devotees of humanism in Dubrovnik

By the time Diversi arrived in Dubrovnik, a humanistic circle had already been established in the city. Italy being the centre of humanism, the European humanists tended to choose it for their place of study. The cultural disposition of Dalmatia towards Italy lay in a network of good relations. Dubrovnik too

²⁰ Mihovil Kombol, *Povijest hrvatske književnosti do preporoda*. Zagreb: Matica hrvatska, 1945: p. 54; Nikica Kolumbić, *Hrvatska književnost od humanizma do manirizma*. Zagreb: Nakladni zavod Matice hrvatske, 1980: p. 39; Đuro Körbler, »Jakov Bunić, Dubrovčanin, latinski pjesnik (1469-1534)«. *Rad JAZU* 180 (1910): pp. 64, 78; Z. Janeković Römer, *Okvir slobode*: pp. 188-189.

²¹ *Acta Consilii Maioris*, vol. 12, f. 204v.

²² SAD, *Acta Consilii Rogatorum*, ser. 3, vol. 54, ff. 16r-18r; Vinko Foretić, *Povijest Dubrovnika do 1808*, vol. 1. Zagreb: NZMH, 1980: p. 353; Vladimir Bazala, *Pregled hrvatske znanstvene baštine*. Zagreb: Matica hrvatska, 1978: p. 28; I. Perić. »Dva reformna zahvata«: p. 222.

²³ Z. Janeković Römer, *Okvir slobode*: pp. 189-192.

sensed the strong cultural vibrations of humanistic Italy. It was not until the second half of the century that the aroused enthusiasm gave results, while in Diversi's time a promising cultural future was merely anticipated. Thus it should not come as a surprise that Diversi sought the company of his fellow Italians who were in the city for reasons of business or intellectual pursuits. In his *Situs aedificiorum* he mentions Nicola de Ciria, a nobleman of Cremona, who studied literature, but because of the "problems at home, he assumed the office of chancellor in Dubrovnik" between 1437 and 1440.²⁴ The two Italians, aliens in the city, built their friendship on compatriotism as well as on kindred spirit. Philip describes Nicola as an excellent and versed writer thanks to whom Esculapius' portrait and an epitaph in his honour had been carved in the entrance hall of the Rector's Palace.²⁵ In response, Nicola de Ciria wrote a poem in praise of *Situs aedificiorum*, which clearly reflects the master's dissatisfaction with his position in Dubrovnik. Eulogizing the friend's masterwork dedicated to the Senate, Ciria prayed to the patron of Dubrovnik, St. Blaise, to fill the citizens' hearts with more love towards a man who spoke so highly of their city.²⁶ During Diversi's rectorship, Johannes Laurentius Reginus of Feltro stayed in Dubrovnik as a municipal chancellor. With his poems in honour of the distinguished Ragusan patricians, among whom were the councillors Diversi praised in his orations, Reginus initiated the first Ragusan circle of literary enthusiasts.²⁷ Seeds were sown for the flowering of Ragusan poetic production in Latin, the quality of which paralleled

²⁴ F. de Diversis, *Opis slavnoga grada Dubrovnika*, ff. 34-35.

²⁵ Thanks to an error of a learned humanist who failed to distinguish Epidaurum in Konavle from that in the Peloponnesus, Dubrovnik bears one of its most significant humanistic symbols. Similar to their contemporaries, the Ragusans too were deeply devoted to the ancient origin and the mythical settings of Cavtat and Konavle. The author of a versed panegyric in honour of Esculapius is yet another visitor to Dubrovnik, Ciriaco di Filippo Pizziccolli, a humanist of Ancona, who travelled across the Dalmatian coast in quest of epigraphic monuments. Z. Janeković Römer, *Okvir slobode*: pp. 92, 287, 386; Igor Fisković, »Djelo Filipa de Diversisa kao izvor poznavanju kulture i povijesti Dubrovnika«, in: idem, *Reljef renesansnog Dubrovnika*. Dubrovnik: Matica hrvatska Dubrovnik, 1993: pp. 36-38; Giuseppe Praga, »Indagini e studi sul umanesimo in Dalmazia: Ciriaco de Pizziccolli e Marino Resti«. *Archivio storico per la Dalmazia* 13 (1932): pp. 263-280.

²⁶ V. Brunelli, »Introduzione«: p. 8; I. Božić, »Dve beleške o Filipu de Diversisu«: p. 316.

²⁷ Reginus dedicated the poems to Pasqualis and Nicolaus de Resti, Junius de Grade, Volze Michaelis de Bobalio, Stephanus de Gozze, Franciscus de Benessa, Johannes de Crieua, and others. Milan Rešetar, »Pjesme Ivana Lovra Regina dubrovačkoga kancelara XV. vijeka«. *Grada za povijest književnosti hrvatske* 3 (1901): pp. 19-43.

the highest embodiments of the day. The humanistic circle included Ragusan patricians and commoners, along with the Italians employed in the city administration.²⁸ Thus Dubrovnik found yet another way to follow the European intellectual mainstream. It was the communication within the community of scholars that set the basis of Europe as a spiritual community. The exchange of ideas between them contributed to the development of Western culture, but also individualism, the image of oneself, and disposition towards publicity and fame. Ragusan and other Croatian humanists proved ardent in their humanistic pursuits, attaching equal importance to the domestic as well as the European spiritual setting.²⁹

Croatian and Ragusan Latinists alike were unjustly accused of their neglect of the vernacular. It came as a result of the misunderstanding of early humanism because of the premium it placed upon Latin. It was the common language of culture, therefore a means of intellectual communication, a “spiritual *koiné*”. An attitude of mind attaching prime importance to Latin rested upon the idea that human society contains a common norm, which the humanists sought in antiquity.³⁰ The knowledge of Latin and the achievements of Latin literature were regarded as essential in evaluating the cultural level of a community because none other than the Latinists were the torchbearers and promoters of the new cultural movements. With all those hoping for international recognition, notably the writers whose native tongue was little spoken, Latin was the key to success. Following this pattern, they revived the elegant, literary, classical Latin, abandoning the tradition of medieval oral Latin. The new scholarly language entered literature, but everyday communication as well. Everything was subject to Latinization, from government institutions and administration to names and surnames, even fashion. The affirmation of Latin as a language of artistic creation resulted in the underestimation of the vernacular in the early years of humanism.

²⁸ Z. Janeković Römer, *Okvir slobode*: pp. 287-288; I. Božić, »Pojava humanizma u Dubrovniku«: p. 11.

²⁹ Ljerka Schiffler, *Humanizam bez granica*. Zagreb: Hrvatsko filozofsko društvo, 1992: p. 25; Nikica Kolumbić, »Humanistički krugovi kao čimbenici nacionalne i europske duhovne integracije«, in: *Hrvatski humanizam, Dubrovnik i dalmatinske komune. Dani hvarskog kazališta* 17 (1991): pp. 17-27; John R. Hale, *The Civilization of Europe in the Renaissance*. New York: Atheneum etc., 1993: pp. 280-282.

³⁰ Veljko Gortan and Vladimir Vratović, *Hrvatski latinisti*, vol. 1. [Pet stoljeća hrvatske književnosti, vol. 2]. Zagreb: Nakladni zavod Matice hrvatske, 1969: p. 19; Eugenio Garin, *Italijanski humanizam*. Novi Sad: Književna zajednica Novog Sada, 1988: p. 192.

Some humanists tended to glorify classical Latin as a device for spreading scholarship and “conquering Europe”.³¹ In contrast, the Croatian language, along with other vernaculars, was viewed by the humanists-Latinists as *sermo barbarus* or “Scythian screeching”.³² However, the very achievements of this literature in Latin gave great impetus to the development of the vernacular. The translations of the classics, philological work, historiography, and direct communication through epistles and discourses were clear proof of cultural growth.³³ In his work *Historia Ragusii*, Giovanni Conversini, a Ragusan notary from Ravenna, testifies that in the fourteenth century Ragusans were bad Latinists, their speech being unrefined and distorted with barbarisms. He further adds that among the ignorant and unsophisticated Ragusans, whose spirit showed no excitement over scholarship and literary pursuits, he misses *delitiae Latii*.³⁴ But the offspring of these uneducated Ragusans became excellent Latinists, even Grecians who, when the excellence of their polished expression was at stake, were capable of paralleling any poet of the day. It was on the literary tradition set by the Croatian Latinists that the future generations of writers built their success in the vernacular. The Latin humanists set the bases of the future literary achievements in Croatian in terms of form, content, and idea, a credit they rightly deserve.

The heritage of antiquity and the reality of humanism

Classical art and scholarship, similar to that of humanism, developed from the embryo of rhetoric. The importance of rhetoric skill in public life varied throughout history. It either soared, or was degraded to a simple school

³¹ Ratimir Mardešić, »Novovjekovna latinska književnost«, in: *Povijest svjetske književnosti*, vol. 2. Zagreb: Mladost, 1977: pp. 407-409, 424.

³² In the funeral oration on Martolus de Zamagna, Crieva discoursed on the noble “Roman language” which the Ragusans once used in public and private communication, unlike the “Scythian” that prevailed later. He also regretted the dying out of the old Ragusan dialect which had survived in the patrician council hall, but fell into disuse when Crieva was a young boy. “*Neque vero schyticus sermo nobis vernaculus atque peculiaris, huic origini repugnat: nam adhuc reliquiae quaedam et vestigia romani sermonis apud nos extant, et patrum memoria omnes nostri progenitores, et publice et privatim, romanam linguam, que nunc penitus obsolevit, loquebantur; et me puero memini, nonnullos senes romana lingua, quae tunc rhacusaea dicebatur, causas actitare solitos.*” Franjo Rački, »Iz djela E.I. Crievića Dubrovčanina«. *Starine JAZU* 4 (1872): p. 193. On patrician idiom, see Z. Janeković Römer, *Okvir slobode*: pp. 343-344.

³³ N. Kolumbić, *Hrvatska književnost od humanizma do manirizma*: p. 71; V. Gortan-V. Vratović, *Hrvatski latinisti I*: pp. 19-25, 31-34.

³⁴ F. Rački, »Prilozi za poviest humanisma i renaissance«: p. 167.

exercise or an affected panegyric. In democratic Athens rhetoric played such an important role in public life that it was an essential qualification for public office and a prerequisite for career prospects. The end of Greek freedom marked the end of rhetoric as such - Greek rhetoric survived in the school manuals, its wellspring having moved to Rome. The intensive political life of republican Rome sparked off a widespread practice of oratorical skill, having transformed the norms of Greek rhetoric norms by placing emphasis on the practical, direct intention of speech. The collapse of the Roman republic and its ideals influenced Roman rhetoric in the same way the Macedonian and Roman invasion had influenced the rhetoric of ancient Greece. Devoid of political aim and influence, it once again became art for its own sake. Legal oratory lost its former significance, and hardly was a new Cicero likely to emerge. What remained was an awareness of the procedure and of the rules of rhetoric, which was transferred to political and ceremonial oratory. Lacking in political freedom and rhetorical effectiveness, rhetors resorted to formal effects. Ancient rhetoric owed its medieval reputation to the belief that there was a union of verbal expression and wisdom, and that together they embodied and maintained human society. The most influential was the florid laud - *laudes* and *praeconia* - guised in diverse stylistic and ritual forms. This kind of elaborate oratory had great influence upon humanistic rhetoric too. In addition, together with the growing interest in Roman law, the end of the eleventh century gave way to a revival of the political rhetoric related to government institutions and diplomacy. Fourteenth-century Italian humanism surpassed in every way the medieval rethinking of rhetoric, opening new space for ancient principles. Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria*, which approaches speech as the exclusive and greatest of human capacities, thus placing rhetoric at the peak of human activities from the ethic, aesthetic, and philosophical perspective, found the most fertile ground in humanism. Rhetoric was raised above all other disciplines; moreover, it became their core.³⁵ Humanistic rhetoricians focused on language as a medium which articulated entire human creativity. Speech and word were understood as exemplary manifestations of humanity, power which defined humanity, facilitated communication, and with it, knowledge and creativity. Rhetoric, spoken or written, was incorporated into the basis of the humanistic programme as a central educational discipline, a medium for attaining the

³⁵ Ernst R. Curtius, *Europska književnost i latinsko srednjovjekovlje*. Zagreb: Naprijed, 1998: pp. 73-76, 78, 87, 171-173, 473-476.

full excellence of humanity and harmonious individuality, and lastly, it was the goal of humanists in pursuit of the idea of an active life and lust for fame. It was part of the philosophy which outlined humanistic education.³⁶ An ideal man was conceived as an ideal orator. "A sound man cannot be without words and speech because without them there is no experience or competence of the mind", wrote Stefano Guazzo.³⁷

Early Humanism was to adulate Cicero for his eclectic philosophy and political pragmatism, and above all for his elegant style and sophisticated rhetoric. The passionate study of Cicero's speeches and tractates, followed by the writings of the imperial panegyrists, and philological achievements and classical ideas in general contributed to the growing significance of the new rhetoric. In his works and orations, Diversi wanted to model himself on the great master, whom he experienced as a "rule, source, and an epitome of verbal articulation". He believed that his works followed Cicero's fundamental principle in that the words should be fitted to the topic. In *Situs aedificiorum*, Diversi expounded the basis of his rhetoric skill, that is, the view on the composition of the work or speech: "As the conclusion of the discourse comes first in the conceptualizing process of the speaker's mind and last while delivering it, it should never come prior to the beginning or the middle because the beginning and the middle are indispensable steps towards the goal... It is a well-known fact that the philosophers and scholars follow the former procedure regardless of whether they study grammar, logic, natural philosophy, ethics, or rhetoric even". He believed that in all the sciences, from physics and logic to grammar and rhetoric, one should first become familiar with the elements in order to be able to grasp the whole. Thus, it is necessary to know the parts of the sentence and of the speech to be able to understand it as a whole. The task of rhetoric is effectiveness and argumentation, and to make it possible, the motives and other parts of the speech should be determined first.³⁸ Despite his commitment to Cicero, Diversi's speeches, shaped in ornate, overaccentuated Latin, share, apart from the length of the phrase, no common features with those of the great classical master. The simple language and syntax of *Situs aedificiorum* is also far not only from

³⁶ Lj. Schiffler, *Humanizam bez granica*: p. 57; Jacob Burckhardt, *Kultura renesanse u Italiji*. Zagreb: Prosvjeta, 1997: pp. 206-211.

³⁷ E. Garin, *Italijanski humanizam*: p. 188.

³⁸ F. de Diversis, *Opis slavnoga grada Dubrovnika*: ff. 96-97.

the ideals of antiquity, but from those of his own time as well. According to Tomo Krša, one of the first who researched Diversi, the latter was far from the elegant style of Cicero or Sallust.³⁹ Moreover, he cannot even be compared with most of his Dalmatian contemporaries or successors. Beginning with Nikola, Bishop of Modruš, whose funeral oration on Cardinal Riari is the first incunabulum written by a Croatian author, to Elias de Crieva and his oratorical bravura, in line with the verbosity of a succession of anti-Turkish speakers throughout Europe, many of them were to surpass Diversi in both capacity and elocution.⁴⁰ Though far from the highest literary and rhetorical embodiments of his day, Diversi's contribution still bears certain significance. Several foremost figures gave the greatest impetus to the humanistic movement, yet an army of devotees, less talented but just as passionate, like Philip Diversi, helped propagate the humanist point of view. His speeches are a typical example of the humanistic genre, and viewed historically, their significance is even greater in that they mirror the cultural reality of Dubrovnik in its true dimension.

Praise and self-praise: two faces of the humanistic eulogic ceremonial oratory

Similar to other epideictic oratories of his time, Diversi's discourses stem from the popular genre developed in the classical period of ancient Rome, when ceremonial oratory eulogizing the ruler took precedence over legal and political public deliberation. Patrician funerals were customarily accompanied by a gathering of the distinguished Romans on the Forum, during which public speeches were delivered in honour and praise of the deceased and his career, but also of the senatorial elite. Ceremonial oratories on other occasions had a similar purpose.⁴¹ Humanism thus embraced, from the perspective of the classical form, this second-rate rhetorical genre. The age of humanism was an active time, the time of politics and diplomacy, but also

³⁹ Tommaso Chersa, *Degli illustri Toscani stati in diversi tempi a Ragusa commentario*. Padova: Minerva, 1828: pp. 5-11; V. Brunnelli, »Introduzione«: p. 7; I. Božić, »Pojava humanizma u Dubrovniku«: p. 10.

⁴⁰ V. Gortan-V. Vratović, *Hrvatski latinisti I*: p. 28.

⁴¹ Simon Price, »From noble funerals to divine cult: the consecration of Roman Emperors«, in: *Rituals of Royalty, Power and Ceremonial in Traditional Societies*, ed. David Cannadine and Simon Price. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992: pp. 62-65, 83-84; E. Curtius, *Europska književnost i latinsko srednjovjekovlje*: p. 78.

the time of dependence on the powerful. The generosity of benefactors and employers was repaid in praises during and after their life. Panegyrics of different kinds became one of the typical expressive forms of the humanists. It was an occasion for fawning, a public display of learning, and the satisfaction of one's personal ambition. Diversi's discourses open up a much-practised Ragusan tradition of humanistic panegyrics.⁴² Several Ragusans and their visitors are known to have mastered this genre. Commissioned by the Senate towards the end of the fifteenth century, Juraj Dragišić delivered a funeral oration "*pro magnifico et generoso senatore Junio Georgio, in aede divi Francisci*". Though modest, this enlightening Franciscan of Srebrenica addressed the Ragusans on Aristotle, on the erudition and civic virtue of the deceased, the nobility of his relatives, particular praise being reserved for the deceased's nephew and his student, Sigismundus de Georgio. Dragišić's personal theological commitment stamped most of the speech, as he enforced arguments on the body and soul, as well as on consolation.⁴³ Judging by the number of speeches extant, Elias de Crieva seems to have been a welcome speaker on various occasions, a role he willingly accepted. The oratory delivered at the Cathedral, following the death of King Matthias Corvinus, was constructed on the classical *fortitudo* - *sapientia* topos, eulogizing the king's power, stature, military skill, courage displayed in the war against the Turks, but also his erudition, statesmanship, and wisdom. His story of the Hungarian king features a host of most colourful ancient characters - Thracians, Illyrians, Macedonians, Greeks, Brutus, Anaxagoras, Plato, Scipio, Hannibal, Demosthenes, Cicero - described by means of classical rhetorical ornamentation. Crieva invoked the rhetorical rule of exordium, or beginning portion of the discourse, speaking mostly about himself and the notables in the audience. He also found words of praise for Wladyslaw Jagiello, whose sponsorship he hoped to win, since he failed to join his fellow-citizens Seraphinus de Bona, Petrus de Zamagna, and Thomas de Basilio at the court of King Matthias, a privileged centre of humanistic culture. Apparently he found his own speech appealing, for in the lamentation he composed during a Christmas spent in prison, he mentions the credit he earned on account of

⁴² Z. Janeković Römer, *Okvir slobode*: pp. 312-314.

⁴³ Juraj Dragišić, *Oratio funebris habita pro magnifico et generoso senatore Junio Georgio patritio Rhagusino in aede Divi Francisci XIII. Cal. Martias MCCCCCLXXXVIII*. Library of Baltazar Bogišić in Cavtat, Ink. 5; Ivica Martinović, »Humanist, filozof i teolog Juraj Dragišić«. *Dubrovnik N.S.* 6/4 (1995): pp. 224-225.

his elocution in the funeral oration on King Matthias.⁴⁴ Furnished with the usual rhetorical tools, his discourse on Johannes de Gozze, a trilingual poet, focuses on the latter's ancient Roman origin, equal emphasis being given to Epidaurum and the legendary Roman-Bosnian Prince Pavlimir. The origin was the central theme of his discourse on Nicolaus de Gozze too. He traced the descent of the mother's family to the ever popular patriciate of Rome, to the Sergii family. He compared Paula de Zamagna, a modest noblewoman who "enjoyed home cooking, drank diluted wine and desired no sweet delicacies, jewellery, scents or fragrances from her husband", with Penelope, Lucrecia, Portia, and the famous Biblical women - Sarah, Lia, Rachel, Susan, Elizabeth.⁴⁵ Common loci of Crieva's discourses and the like are the use of Latin, the ancient Roman origin of Ragusan patrician families, the notion of Illyria, connections between Epidaurum and Dubrovnik, and the praise of the deceased's virtues, spiced with classical literary and mythological ornamentation.

An individual's glory was one of the categories which humanism adopted from the heritage of ancient Rome. At the time when politics and its affirmation as the prime and most virtuous discipline dominated, lust for fame, triumphs and laurel wreaths seemed to have been but a logical consequence. From the world of politics and power, ambition shifted into the literary world, becoming one of its prominent features. The humanists considered themselves the revivalists of the glorious past and the torchbearers of their time, the result of which often manifested itself in self-admiration or conceit. *Image* was an important moment, not necessarily reflecting genuine value since it often concealed incapacity and lack of talent. The perilous bait of fame was so strong that instead of value it was likely to produce barren sweet talk and

⁴⁴ Darinka Nevenić Grabovac, »Oratio funebris in regem Mathiam«. *Živa antika* 28 (1978): pp. 274-284; 259-285; V. Gortan-V. Vratović, *Hrvatski latinisti* I: p. 87.

⁴⁵ Darinka Nevenić Grabovac, »Oratio funebris humaniste Ilije Crijevića dubrovačkom pesniku Ivanu (Dživu) Gučetiću«. *Živa antika* 24/1-2 (1974): pp. 333-364; eadem, »Ilija Lamprice Crijević, Posmrtni govor svojem ujaku Juniju Sorkočeviću«. *Živa antika* 27/1 (1977): pp. 231-262; eadem, »Ovenčani pesnik Ilija Crijević drži posmrtno slovo Dubrovkinji Pavli Džamanjić«. *Živa antika* 30 (1980): pp. 205-216. Apart from those mentioned, Crieva's orations in honour of Nicolaus de Gozze, Orsatus de Gozze, Bartolus de Gozze, Marinus de Grade, Paladinus de Gondola, Paulus de Basilio, Damianus de Gozze, and Bartolus de Resti have also been preserved. F. Rački, »Iz djela E.I. Crievića Dubrovčanina«: pp. 195-197; Seraphinus Maria Cerva, *Bibliotheca Ragusina in qua Ragusini scriptores eorumque gesta et scripta recensentur*, vol. 1-4, ed. Stjepan Krasić. [Hrvatski latinisti, vol. 8]. Zagreb: JAZU, 1975: vol. 2-3, pp. 14-16, 223-225, 463-469; vol. 4: pp. 6, 45-46, 79-80.

floridness. A host of humanists tended to indulge in honours, laurels, and extrinsic manifestations of fame. The public speeches were also closely related to the humanistic concept of fame. It became a general trend and a goal of many. Those who tried to conceal their aspirations became caught in the drift as well. Compendia of famous people were compiled, biographies of renowned artists written, and the laurel wreath was worth a crown in humanistic circles.⁴⁶ Ragusan *poetae laureati* prided themselves with their honours just as knights or rectors did with theirs.⁴⁷ Honour-winning occasions were much sought after, lust being the right word. For example, Elias de Crieva was a man of considerable stature. Born to privilege, he occupied the high position of school rector, was a *poeta laureatus*, member of the Senate, later canon, and holder of many other high offices. But he craved something else: the fame that his Roman friends in youth had enjoyed, or the same fame achieved by the members of the Hungarian court humanistic circle. His letters to King Wladyslaw Jagiello are imbued with bitter criticism of the environment which “keeps him in a slave workshop with students, the beasts of many heads”. His plea to the king having failed, he turned to the Bishop of Varadin with a petition for the court position of literature master, in such a passionate manner as a lover would woo his mistress: “This desire torments me so that a slave hungers not for his freedom nor an outcast for his abandoned home as much as I wish to see you, speak to you and stoop to embrace your knees”.⁴⁸ In a speech honouring his uncle, a member of the noble family Sorgo, the audience witnessed Crieva’s grievance over the fact that he had to give up book-reading and oratory practice because of family problems and everyday communication with the common people.⁴⁹ Lust for fame and honours, grief over a brilliant youth spent in Rome, the Academy of Julius Pomponius Laetus and his obsessive love and hate of the sophisticated and sensual Flavia, together with envy of his fellow-citizens who held high-ranking offices at foreign courts, drove him to behave contrary to his stature, his old age being marked by the caricatural efforts of a disillusioned luminary. His case may be considered typical rather than exceptional when humanists are concerned. They envisaged themselves as extraordinary

⁴⁶ J. Burckhardt, *Kultura renesanse u Italiji*: pp. 135-137.

⁴⁷ Z. Janeković Römer, *Okvir slobode*: p. 247.

⁴⁸ F. Rački, »Iz djela E. I. Crievića Dubrovčanina«: pp. 177-178; D. Nevenić Grabovac, »Ilija Lamprice Crijević«: p. 234.

⁴⁹ D. Nevenić Grabovac, »Ilija Lamprice Crijević«: p. 255.

individuals devoted to their literary mission, unburdened and free from trivial everyday responsibilities. The most profound lust for honour and fame tended to result in even greater disappointment and discontent, drawing thus a characteristic psychological portrait of a humanist. Diversi fitted into this pattern perfectly, for in his opinion the Ragusan milieu gravely underestimated his qualities and knowledge. He never lost hope that one day he could devote himself entirely to Latin and the humanities, while some other master would teach Italian. Had Dubrovnik recognized his merit, many Ragusans would have profited from his programme, he added maliciously.⁵⁰ Regardless of how much he tried to draw attention to the elegance of his humanistic ornament in an attempt to conform to the Ragusan mentality and to flatter the authorities, the reaction that followed was unexpected and disappointing. Thus his ceremonial oratories exhibit an increasing urge for social affirmation rather than literary talent. In his last speech, delivered in Dubrovnik Cathedral, the grandiose style could no longer conceal his bitterness. Underlying the rhetorical formula of modesty is Diversi's obscured criticism of the Ragusan authorities which, in his opinion, overburdened him with unnecessary duties, the volume of which most directly interfered with his pursuits. His stay in Dubrovnik drawing to a close, Diversi became so overwhelmed with discontent that he was unable to control himself even on occasions such as the delivery of a public address. Accounting for Albert's defeat at Smederevo, he fired yet another poisonous arrow at the gathered patricians by mentioning the "vulgar and ignorant people who defame the king and who should, once they restrain their babbling and slanderous tongues, take to their petty trade instead of listening to those wiser than themselves".⁵¹

Formulae oratoriae of Diversi's ceremonial orations

Only rarely do Diversi's rhetorical structures and devices deviate from the Ciceronian canons. Following a strictly determined order, Diversi first

⁵⁰ F. de Diversis, *Opis slavnoga grada Dubrovnika*: ff. 131-132. The decision he had in mind was the one brought by the Minor Council on 29 January 1435, according to which master Zorzi of Mantua was to teach the elementary level, "sufficient for the practice of business correspondence and bookkeeping", while Diversi was to teach the higher level, concentrating on grammar and rhetoric. *Acta Consilii Maioris*, vol. 5, f. 19r; I. Perić, »Dva reformna zahvata«: p. 220.

⁵¹ »Oratio in funere Alberti regis / Govor uz smrt kralja Alberta«, in: F. de Diversis, *Dubrovački govori u slavu ugarskih kraljeva Sigismunda i Alberta*, ed. Z. Janeković Römer. Dubrovnik - Zagreb: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku, 2001: pp. 142-143.

tries to gain the audience's attention by appealing to universal values, then shifts to the topic, continues effectively, and brings the speech to an end. In order to be persuasive, he uses contradictions, comparisons, illustrations, analogy and contrast, quotations (Cicero in particular), appeals to the auditors' passions, seeking their adherence.⁵² Each of the three speeches opens and closes with diplomatic formulas expressing appreciation - *feliciter implicit* or *feliciter explicit* - which contribute to the strictness of the form. Diversi proceeds with an introduction of himself, emphasizing that he is a doctor of liberal arts and, moreover, an excellent one (*eximius*).⁵³ After the introduction, which identifies the written form of the speech as a document, there follow in precedence five parts of the oration - *inventio*, *dispositio*, *elocutio*, *memoria*, and *actio* - arranged according to the manuals Diversi used in his rhetorical courses.⁵⁴ In a few words the speaker points to the contents of the speech, after which he begins his deliberation, using the usual methods of addressing the audience. First, he salutes everyone present following the established hierarchy: the archbishop first, then the rector, the senators, while in Albert's funeral oration he also addresses the clergy, all the patricians, citizens, learned doctors, and foreigners.⁵⁵

A modest opening, determined by the classical rules of rhetoric⁵⁶, seemed anything but modest with Diversi. The false modesty with which he tried to appeal to the audience was so unnatural at times that it produced quite the opposite effect. Adverting to his ineptitude to perform the task, his unpolished Latin and weakness of talent seem like a transparent display of "fishing for compliments" and fawning on the authorities at whose prompting he decided to speak despite his humbleness. Praising others, he praised himself, a common practice among the traditional and modern rhetors. The oration in honour of the late King Sigismund, delivered in Dubrovnik Cathedral on 20 January

⁵² Compare E. Curtius, *Europska književnost i latinsko srednjovjekovlje*: p. 132.

⁵³ F. de Diversis, »Oratio in funere Alberti regis«: p. 84.

⁵⁴ The best known rhetorical guides in the Middle Ages were the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, often called *Rhetorica nova*, along with Cicero's early work *De inventione* or *Rhetorica vetus*. A more sophisticated concept of rhetoric and its relationship to philosophy was adopted from Cicero's *De oratore*. The latter's orations on politics and on the law courts were blindly used as models. V. Vratović, »Rimska književnost«: pp. 231, 235-237.

⁵⁵ »Oratio in funere Sigismundi imperatoris / Govor u smrt cara Sigismunda«, in: F. de Diversis, *Dubrovački govori u slavu ugarskih kraljeva Sigismunda i Alberta*: pp. 52-53; »Oratio in funere Alberti regis«: pp. 128-129.

⁵⁶ Compare E. Curtius, *Europska književnost i latinsko srednjovjekovlje*: pp. 94-95.

1438, commenced with reminiscences of numerous occasions in which, commissioned by the Ragusan Senate, he had spoken from that very same place.⁵⁷ He emphasized, with false acclamation, that his speeches had not been heard in the Cathedral for months because he “has been following the wise advice of his friends to discourse only upon request and upon grave matters”. This “modest” introduction was concluded with the view that such an occasion had undoubtedly arrived, and that it would be most inappropriate if he, who had masterly eulogized many eminent heads since his youth, should miss the moment. It was underneath this unhidden self-praise that he incorporated the true topos of modesty, in which he claimed that his verbosity could not match the topic nor could his rhetorical skill arrange all the elements of his oration accordingly. Although “ill equipped”, he could not turn down the senator’s request which he considered an honour.⁵⁸ In the second oration, delivered on 26 February 1438, he pleads with the audience to forgive him the deficiencies of his address, not because of a lack of rhetorical capacity but because he knows little about the worthy deeds of Albert of Hapsburg and his ancestors.⁵⁹ During Albert’s commemoration on 27 October 1439, Diversi wrapped the formula of modesty into tormenting grief that prevented him from following the right order of the speech. His rhetorical skill is far too modest to be able to console the king’s grief-stricken subjects. It may have been a challenge for the competent Greek or Roman orators but not him, despite his passionate dedication to the study of the liberal arts. He feared that for grief, incapacity or insufficient knowledge of the king’s accomplishments he might falter in his discourse and thus disrupt the linear order of the speech. To reassure the audience, he added that many a time had he glorified the deeds and virtues of the most worthy rulers, and that upon that occasion too, upon the most eager prompting of the senators, he stood there like so many times before while they listened attentively.⁶⁰

In a lightly-toned oration, occasioned by Albert’s coronation as king of Hungary, he introduces the auditors to rhetorical rules according to which “the orator should primarily use his skill, natural capacity, and sound education

⁵⁷ Diversi may have delivered more speeches at the Cathedral, but only these three are extant.

⁵⁸ F. de Diversis, »Oratio in funere Sigismundi imperatoris«: pp. 54-55.

⁵⁹ F. de Diversis, »Oratio in laudem Alberti regis / Govor u slavu kralja Alberta«, in: F. de Diversis, *Dubrovački govori u slavu ugarskih kraljeva Sigismunda i Alberta*: pp. 86-87.

⁶⁰ F. de Diversis, »Oratio in funere Sigismundi imperatoris«: pp. 128-133.

to appeal to the audience, gaining their sympathy, attention, and response”. As he himself admits, upon this occasion he had decided to abandon the rules, as the honourable audience before him was attentive enough and yearning to hear his speech, for they had always “lavished most miraculous praises upon him”.⁶¹ In a single move he demonstrated effectively his knowledge of rhetoric, for by flattering the audience he won their full attention. In *Situs aedificorium*, too, he refers to his orations in the Cathedral, which he had delivered at the Senate’s request, “unanimous in their desire to hear me”.⁶²

The aim of panegyric was to eulogize the ancestors, the deeds in youth, and finally, the mature years. Physical beauty was also amplified. It is one of the rare instructions Diversi decided to omit because the shortage of time forced him to leave out the appraisal of Sigismund’s forefathers and his appearance. There is ground to believe that his decision was guided by a lack of information rather than that of time since he had never set eyes on the king, not even a painted portrait, and his familiarity with the Luxemburg dynasty was quite vague.⁶³ In the examples and comparisons cited, he tends to lean on the classical sources. The two kings are attributed with traditional sovereign but also civic virtues, sharing the company of ancient emperors and republican advocates. Among those listed, however, there were those to whom virtue was quite alien, the comparison with them being all but complimentary, but at the time this seemed far less important than the rhetorical principles. Although deeply tinged by the Christian tradition, Diversi’s choice of Biblical figures is surprisingly modest in comparison with those of antiquity. As a paragon of virtue he refers to David only, and among those whose examples should not be followed are Absalom and Jeroboam. He blends devotion to antiquity with the Christian faith and ethics, but in his day the Christian heroes were not a serious threat to the Ancients.⁶⁴ Having admitted that his knowledge of Albert was obscure, he filled the time with an excessive number of analogies. King Albert was attributed with moral and Christian virtues rather than with those of a sovereign, and his short reign inspired Diversi towards the idea of the sanctity

⁶¹ F. de Diversis, »Oratio in laudem Alberti regis«: pp. 84-85.

⁶² F. de Diversis, *Opis slavnoga grada Dubrovnika*: ff. 140-141.

⁶³ F. de Diversis, »Oratio in funere Sigismundi imperatoris«: pp. 56-57.

⁶⁴ Ibidem, pp. 68-69, 72-77.

and martyrdom of the late king.⁶⁵ In his description the king grew into a fictional character, uninterested in power but devoted to the welfare of his realm. Most of all, the king wanted his subjects to think worthily of him, which often prompted him to help them financially even from his own family resources. The words describing the commonweal, similar to those carved above the doorway of the Ragusan Council Hall, must have been comforting to both the Rector and the senators.⁶⁶

Diversi's arguments in praise of the kings are mainly *loci communes*, *topoi*. He applied all the ornamentation the Ancients could provide. God Himself and all on Earth witness the glory and virtues of the two kings. They all praise, rejoice, or weep, not only Hungary, Bohemia or Dubrovnik, but also the Roman Church, Italy, Germany, Spain, Gaul, England, and all the provinces across the Alps, all the states far and wide, the scripts and languages of every nation. Asia, too, as *pars pro toto* of the entire world hails, in honour of the king, the star and the Sun which shine down on earth. "Each gender and age", "all time and space", "all nations and country", all of these are formulas borrowed, perhaps literally copied, from the classical authors. Nature, all the lands and seas, rivers, mountains, and valleys that praise and worship Sigismund and Albert are but a literary allusion. The topos of inexpressibility and inability to put thoughts into words are often invoked as rhetorical devices: no rhetorical skill or intellectual capacity can describe the dignity of the two royal heads, no faculty of the mind, literary ability nor verbosity could verily eulogize their praiseworthy deeds. No mind is capable of understanding their merits, let alone panegyryze them, a task which could have been mastered only by the great orators of antiquity. Diversi himself admits, however, that this modesty is no other than a literary pattern when he quotes that he will prove the kings' virtues and persuade the audience that he is an orator and not a flatterer. Kings have been presented as heroes, divinities sent down by God to protect the entrusted kingdoms and the Christian faith. No obstacles, illnesses, fear, or anything else could distract them from this mission. Heroic were their noble spirits and bodies, strong willed, self-controlled, responsible, and determined, enhanced by new Christian and humanistic virtues: piety, righteousness, charity, and wisdom.

⁶⁵ F. de Diversis, »Oratio in laudem Alberti regis«: pp. 90-95, 98-105; »Oratio in funere Alberti regis«: pp. 150-151.

⁶⁶ F. de Diversis, »Oratio in laudem Alberti regis«: pp. 96-97, 102-107, 108-109, 114-115; »Oratio in funere Alberti regis«: pp. 136-139.

The *fortitudo-sapientia* topos was regularly used in panegyrics on rulers. In the best Ciceronian manner, the orator praises their military skill, but also wisdom and commitment to protect peace and unity. The discourses are also abundant in illustrious historical examples of unity that brings omnipresent prosperity, and destructive disunity which breeds candidates for Hell, joy for none other than the devil. According to Diversi, Albert's indulgence in *litterarum studia* has brought him closer to the humanists. It shows how the typical heroic and gallant ethos of the West had given way to moral virtues, education, poetry, and rhetoric. The muses were to join Mars, and an ideal ruler was no longer just a soldier but a learned man, poet, and philosopher as well. This, too, cannot be considered Diversi's personal observation, but rather a shift from the former medieval topos. The statement that he would relate only a fragment of what may be said in praise of the rulers is also a commonplace. Their uniqueness, awe-inspiring achievements that surpass the most heroic deeds, and the foremost men from the past are mere patterns applied so many times before. Lack of time, fatigue, and the strain of rhetorical practice are the usual excuses for bringing the speech to its close. Thus Diversi lets the audience know that he has spoken much and should, therefore, find the right measure of time and come to an end. Even the dedication with which he rounds off his opusculum, the praise to the Lord for having bestowed the orator with eloquence, is an old topos in a renewed form: gratitude to the ruler has become gratitude to God.⁶⁷ In addition, Diversi has faithfully invoked the principles of classical rhetoric concerning vocabulary, figures of speech, and ornamentation. Countless verbs and adjectives burden his compliments, leading to incomprehension and beyond. Diversi proved at his best in Romanizing proper nouns. The Turks thus became the Trojans, and the Turkish sultan the great *Teucer*. His map of late medieval Europe included *Germania*, *Galia*, *Etruria*, and *Hispania*. Not only did his words interfere with the setting (the Cathedral of Our Lady turned into a pagan temple, *aedes*), but also the audience was addressed as if in ancient Rome: the archbishop was *praesul* or *antistes* and the nobility *consulares* or *patres*, after the Roman senators.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ On *loci communes* see E. Curtius, *Europska književnost i latinsko srednjovjekovlje*: pp. 161-194.

⁶⁸ Compare E. Curtius, *Europska književnost i latinsko srednjovjekovlje*: pp. 79-81, 94-102.

Reality behind the rhetorical decorations

The reality in Diversi's orations is manifold. Adverting to the accomplishments of the two kings, he singled out those which proved most decisive for the fate of Dubrovnik, the Hungarian Kingdom, and Christianity in general. The panegyric on Sigismund contains the defence of Christianity, the wars against the Hussites and the Turks, the Battle of Nicopolis and the arrival in Dubrovnik, the Councils of Constance, Basle, and Pisa, the Great Western Schism solutions, and the coronation as Roman emperor. Italy, Diversi's homeland, was also fitted into the speech, the dukedom of Milan and the rule of the Visconti family, the war of Chioggia, and papal policy. Diversi took special pride in mentioning how Sigismund, on his way to Rome, visited his home town Lucca, having bestowed it with privileges. Commenting on the military and economic failures in Italy, Diversi showed love for the republic and open animosity towards tyranny, following a similar discourse as in *Situs aedificiorum*.⁶⁹ Albert, however, was eulogized on account of his famous Hapsburg origin, the blood ties with the kings of France, and the fact that he was Sigismund's most worthy successor in the fight against the heresy and the Turks.⁷⁰ In order to convince the audience of the political stability, he underlined the continuity on the throne: the good relations that Albert had with Sigismund, his late father-in-law, were a guarantee of the continuance of current policy. For the same reason he also emphasized the unanimity of the Hungarian parliament in approving Sigismund's decision to crown Albert king. The ears of the audience were keenly attuned to the message of his rhetoric: the new king would be benevolent towards the loyal city of Dubrovnik and would protect its privileges. Diversi used a similar formulation after Albert's death, persuading the Ragusans that the new king would resume where the former king had left off, that is, he would overpower the Turks and bring peace to the Republic of Dubrovnik.⁷¹ Diversi presented Albert's conflicts with the Bohemian Hussites and the king of Poland over the crown of Saint Wenceslas as a struggle for Christianity, amplifying the whole event. His Ragusan audience must have preferred hearing about the king's piety and his passionate

⁶⁹ F. de Diversis, »Oratio in funere Sigismundi imperatoris«: pp. 60-61, 64-71; F. de Diversis, *Opis slavnoga grada Dubrovnika*: ff. 48-53; Z. Janeković Römer, *Okvir slobode*: pp. 17-18.

⁷⁰ F. de Diversis, »Oratio in laudem Alberti regis«: pp. 92-97, 110-113, 124-125; »Oratio in funere Alberti regis«: pp. 130-131.

⁷¹ F. de Diversis, »Oratio in laudem Alberti regis«: pp. 88-89, 102-103; »Oratio in funere Alberti regis«: pp. 158-159.

struggle against heresy than about the dynastic interests which often drove him away from the Hungarian kingdom. Namely, the menace of Ottoman invasion marked the beginning of the fifteenth century. Sigismund's defeat at Nicopolis and Albert's failure in Smederevo discouraged the Ragusans and other subjects from putting their trust in the protection of the Hungarian crown. This can be clearly read between the lines of Diversi's speeches, despite the florid wrapping covering the general despair. The high-spirited atmosphere of Albert's coronation was a ray of optimism, as Diversi thanked the merciful Lord for having blessed the kingdom with a strong monarch who would defeat the Turks and bring peace and unity to the land. After the king's death Diversi spoke sadly about the loss of hope which the entire Christendom and the pope, all the king's kingdoms and the Republic of Dubrovnik, had placed in him. Diversi reprimanded the "common and ignorant people who value nothing but success" for slandering the king by blaming him for the Turkish invasion of Smederevo. In his words, the king did everything in his power: amassed ships, army, wheat, and money with the intent not only to liberate Smederevo but all the Christian lands threatened by the Turks. But the king's decision to withdraw during winter, the disunity of the Hungarian and Croatian rulers, together with his oncoming death, led to inevitable defeat. "It is generally believed, but let us pray none of it comes true, that after the king's death the loyal Christians and notably the Hungarians and Slavonians will be victims of the unbearable terror, most cruel plunder and pillage of the heretical Teucers", Diversi states. His vivid rhetoric describes people weeping and crying, desperate, and wretched. The auditors must have left the commemoration quietly, each to resume his daily activities, but shuddering at the thought of what the future might bring. As an air of menace prevailed in Hungary and Croatia, the small Republic had every reason to fear its future.⁷²

The panegyrics in honour of Sigismund and Albert illustrate the funeral customs and rituals practised in fifteenth-century Dubrovnik. Diversi, an eye-witness, relates how the city lived with these events for days. Upon the news of the king's death, the Republic proclaimed a state of national mourning until the election of the successor or for up to a period of at least two months. An impressive memorial service was organized at government expense. A

⁷² F. de Diversis, »Oratio in laudem Alberti regis«: pp. 122-123; »Oratio in funere Alberti regis«: pp. 140-143.

velvet-covered catafalque was placed in the middle of the church, surrounded by hundreds of candles. In addition, the golden crown, the sword and other royal insignia were displayed in front of the catafalque. This entire staging, the rector and the senators in their ceremonial togas, the archbishop and the clergy, the church thronged with familiar and unfamiliar faces - it was a social event *par excellence*. The commemoration was attended by the clerics, canons, and priests who carried burning candles and incense. The rector and the senators entered the church in twos. Upon the toll of the big bell, all those dressed in black togas gathered around the catafalque and stood there, waiting to be dismissed by the archbishop. Such an occasion practically attracted the whole city into the church, the young and the old alike, noble and common, each and every one. As the ceremony lasted until the afternoon hours, the shops would open only after lunchtime. Apart from the mass and the rituals expressing the parting of the deceased from the community, orations were also customary. Diversi mentions that he and *magister* Blasius (Vlaho), a Dominican and doctor of theology, spoke at both memorial services.⁷³ His orations describe some of the mourning customs he had encountered in Dubrovnik. He compares the Republic of Dubrovnik with a weeping widow, inconsolable in her mourning, beating her breasts, clawing herself across the face, grieving over the king's death.⁷⁴ The custom in which the women loosened their hair and pulled it, crying and sobbing over the deceased, kissing him, had long been part of the Mediterranean tradition. Certain attempts were made to ban such mourning rites, since they were considered barbarian, but they were so deep-rooted in the psycho-social structure of the community that no law proved effective.⁷⁵

Equally extravagant, was the ceremony that took place in the Cathedral, occasioning and rejoicing the election of the new Hungarian king. All the bells of the city began to peal, people wore their best garments, celebrating and rejoicing with the sound of trumpets and flutes. The municipality envoys were paying visits to the new king, bearing gifts and tribute in return for privilege and agreement. Speaking in honour of Albert's coronation, Diversi conveyed the festive atmosphere in the Cathedral where the extravagantly dressed senators, patricians, and commoners gathered - the Republic of

⁷³ F. de Diversis, *Opis slavnoga grada Dubrovnika*: ff. 140-141.

⁷⁴ F. de Diversis, »Oratio in funere Sigismundi imperatoris«: pp. 80-81.

⁷⁵ *Liber croceus*, ed. Branislav Nedeljković. [Zbornik za istoriju, jezik i književnost srpskog naroda, series III, vol. 24]. Beograd: SANU, 1997: c. 153.

Dubrovnik, previously personified as a grieving widow, was now a merry bride awaiting her beloved lord and husband in her wedding gown.⁷⁶

Never in his praises did Diversi forget to address the noble dignitaries in the audience and flatter them immoderately. Guided by his own affirmation of and adherence to the idea of aristocracy, he fully supported the political and social exclusiveness of the patriciate. Contrary to the ideal of the noble spirit and nobility as a personal trait, he promoted the value of social order and hierarchy. Diversi compared the Ragusan senators with the Romans, pointing to the classical paragons of their virtues and way of life. His view should be understood from the two determinants of the humanists' social position. First, many of them were dependent on the office they held and thus on the government. It is not surprising that such a position often called for praise of the government in question, particularly by those who stood a poor chance of finding another office. This explains the great popularity of panegyric and its leading position among the literary genres. Second, humanistic views on the nobility were quite complex and contradictory. Poggio Bracciolini could throw down the glove to the patriciate thanks to his good position in the democratic society of Florence. Yet humanism in general never questioned the social order - for the most part, it concerned itself with matters of the mind and spirit. Spiritual kinship connecting the humanists broke down the social barriers between them, but only as far as art and personal ties were concerned. This level seemed to have satisfied the early humanists, notably the Italians, as they failed to go any further and propagate radical ideas on the reform of the social order. Greater interest in social issues was shown by the humanists from the north, such as Erasmus and Thomas More, but only on a theoretical level. It was "reformist humanism" that took upon itself the task of translating this idea into social reality.⁷⁷ Fifteenth-century Dubrovnik resolved the dilemma between nobility of the blood and nobility of the spirit by blending both criteria into the controversial idea of the "inherited personal nobleness of noblemen".⁷⁸ A similar approach is traceable in Diversi as well. His panegyrics on the kings were more of a

⁷⁶ F. de Diversis, »Oratio in laudem Alberti regis«: pp. 126-127; »Oratio in funere Alberti regis«: pp. 158-159.

⁷⁷ Richard Tuck, »Humanism and Political Thought«, in: *The Impact of Humanism on Western Europe*: pp. 59-63; Peter Matheson, »Humanism and Reform Movements«, *ibidem*: pp. 23-42.

⁷⁸ Z. Janeković Römer, *Okvir slobode*: pp. 283-289.

local social occasion than anything else. Aware of this fact, Diversi was overgenerous with compliments in his intent to flatter the employers and secure a better rating in the city's social circles. He placed particular emphasis on the Ragusan envoys to the kings, praised their virtues, noble titles, and the reputation they enjoyed at court. He states recurrently that they were permitted to sit in the king's presence, a detail they most probably publicly boasted about. Distinguished Ragusan diplomats, senators, and the archbishop himself were cited as witnesses of the king's virtues, so that Diversi could praise their own virtue and thus win favour by comparing them with the notables from antiquity. The list of witnesses also included Ivan Stojković (Johannes de Ragusa), a renowned Ragusan Dominican who acted as the king's interpreter during the reception of the Ragusan envoys at the council of Basle.⁷⁹ Among Ragusans, Diversi also included *ban* (vice-regent in Croatia) Matko Talovac because he originated from the island of Korčula. Diversi approved of the king's choice of Talovac for *ban*, considering it most fortunate for Dubrovnik. Although himself an officer in a foreign city, he eulogized the wise Albert who, unlike other foreign rulers, appointed local people to the posts. The Ragusans were far from xenophobic, but it is likely that the envoys brought back news about the Hungarian animosity towards the entourage of foreign kings and queens.⁸⁰

Diversi particularly stirred the audience's passions by speaking about the exceptional affection of the Hungarian kings towards Dubrovnik, the city dearest to them in the entire realm. This certainly moved the hearts of the listeners towards the desired effect. It was through undisputable loyalty and devotion that the Ragusans gained the support of the kings. He unfolded the story from the very beginning, starting with King Louis the Great from the House of Anjou, whom the ancestors of the patrician audience had chosen for their king "when they separated from Venice and were without a shepherd, security, or shelter." He praised their loyalty to the queens during the dynastic crisis, resistance to Ladislav, king of Naples, and devotion to Sigismund at all times, even during his imprisonment. Diversi admired their determination to defend themselves against all potential invaders who wanted to see their flag in Dubrovnik instead of the Hungarian one.⁸¹ That is why the kings treated them

⁷⁹ F. de Diversis, »Oratio in funere Sigismundi imperatoris«: pp. 70-75; »Oratio in laudem Alberti regis«: pp. 140-141, 144-145, 154-157.

⁸⁰ Ibidem: pp. 112-113.

⁸¹ Ibidem: pp. 114-121.

not as “masters would treat their slaves or subjects, but as their equals and friends”. Diversi reveals the source of his argumentation: envoy reports and local rumours.⁸²

It is worth mentioning that in the orations honouring King Sigismund and the coronation of Albert, Diversi referred to Dubrovnik as a city and municipality. Conversely, in his last address he refers to Dubrovnik as a republic, emphasizing its political autonomy and the rule of the patriciate. The term *Respublica Ragusina* first mentioned in 1385⁸³ was frequently used in Ragusan documents of the 1420s, and by the mid-fifteenth century it was adopted in diplomatic communication as well. The Republic developed freely thanks to the privileges of the Hungarian kings and their protection, so that the grandiose phrases on love and affection, if pathetic, were close to the truth.⁸⁴ In Diversi’s words, the Ragusans earned the even greater love of the king because of their efforts in the protection of the Catholic faith and the conversion of the neighbouring “schismatics and heretics”. It was the time of great territorial expansions of the Republic in Primorje and in Konavle, where the Ragusan authorities espoused Catholicism.⁸⁵ According to Diversi, this was more than sufficient to be able to win the benevolence of the Hungarian kings, then and in the years to come. He concluded the funeral oration on Albert in the hope that Dubrovnik would continue to enjoy the support of the royal heads: the city was protected by King Louis, Queens Mary and Elisabeth, Kings Sigismund and Albert, the successor being expected to follow their steps.⁸⁶

Historiography has often tended to misinterpret the divorce between humanism and medieval theology and religion as a result of the essentially pagan or secular-oriented thought of the day. Burckhardt’s concept of the humanist Renaissance as a primarily secular movement followed the fallacy

⁸² F. de Diversis, »Oratio in funere Alberti regis«: pp. 156-157.

⁸³ The first record of the formulation *res publica Ragusii* dates from 7 March 1385, from a decision of the Major Council, by which Blasius de Sörgo was exempted from all duties outside the city and district, on account of his demanding parenthood responsibilities. *Odluke veća Dubrovačke Republike*, vol. 2, ed. Mihajlo Dinić. [Zbornik za istoriju, jezik i književnost srpskog naroda, series III, vol. 21]. Beograd: SANU, 1964: p. 120. This was certainly a sign of the Republic’s thriving self-government under the Hungarian crown, but it was several decades before the formulation rooted.

⁸⁴ F. de Diversis, »Oratio in funere Alberti regis«: pp. 128-131, 156-157.

⁸⁵ F. de Diversis, »Oratio in laudem Alberti regis«: pp. 120-121.

⁸⁶ F. de Diversis, »Oratio in funere Alberti regis«: pp. 156-159.

of the humanists themselves on the complete divorce of their age from the Middle Ages. Yet, the medieval and the Christian heritage in general were incorporated in the new era, but in a different form. The moral of the great models of antiquity was in contradiction with the teaching of the Bible, but generations of humanists tried to reconcile the differences and attune the pre-Christian culture to their own Christian moment. The sixteenth century, particularly faith-stricken, was witness to Christian humanism, which managed to reconcile the teaching of the Ancients with that of Christ.⁸⁷ This form of spiritualism also found its adherents in the literary tradition of Dubrovnik, where rhetoric was no exception. Thus Elias de Crieva, for example, in the funeral oration in honour of his uncle, Junius de Sorgo, explicitly states that only the verbosity of Demosthenes or Cicero could worthily eulogize the deceased's virtues, which would have to be satisfied with his, as he belonged to the community of the most famous theologians and Christians, by far better than Plato's, Xenophon's or Cicero's state. It is clear that *universitas Christiana* was more influential than the classical ideal of the state. But early humanism also recognized the authority of the Bible and the Church Fathers, Augustine in particular. Christian themes were widely represented in late fifteenth-century literature, but Christianity had been an essential element of humanistic thought long before. A blending of the pagan and Christian elements was characteristic of all the humanistic genres, including orations.⁸⁸ Although deeply inspired by humanistic rhetoric and Roman authors, Diversi's orations were imbued with Christianity. Their place in Christian humanism is most certainly determined by the praise of the Hungarian kings and the Republic of Dubrovnik itself as passionate defenders of the Christian faith and the Church. Diversi's words on the Councils of Constance, Basle, and Pisa reveal the Christian zeal and determination with which he argued against heresy and the schism, especially that which befell the Roman Church in view of the papacy issues.⁸⁹ Christian way of thinking may also be traced in his attitude towards death. True, Diversi based consolation on the traditional topos of inevitable death and parting from life, lamenting over the glory of the two kings, in Albert's case over the irretrievably lost youth and the

⁸⁷ R. Tuck, »Humanism and Political Thought«: pp. 53-58; N. Kolumbić, *Hrvatska književnost od humanizma do manirizma*: pp. 64-71.

⁸⁸ P. Burke, »The Spread of Italian Humanism«: p. 18; R. Tuck, »Humanism and Political Thought«: pp. 43-47.

⁸⁹ F. de Diversis, »Oratio in funere Sigismundi imperatoris«: pp. 58-63, 66-69, 76-81.

worldly goods they departed from, not failing to mention the Christian consolation based on faith in a new life beginning thereafter. He concludes both funeral orations by appealing to the Christian serenity, even joy, in the audience because death delivered the late king, a virtuous Christian, from the dungeon, chains, and hardship of worldly life. This could be characterized as medieval metaphors of the “valley of tears”, but his words on joy and consolation convey a new sensibility towards death, no longer a frightful physical termination but an experience of the good, leading to better world.⁹⁰ Lamentation over Albert reveals the true anxiety which spread among his subjects, but concludes with a more optimistic tone because, after all, the king had gone to a better life. Both funeral orations end with Diversi’s appeal for piety, prayer, fast, processions, and charity, for only these values bring consolation and goodness. In heaven, good and holy kings would pray together with the Lord and all the saints for their loyal subjects, and would thus continue to care for them.⁹¹

Diversi’s words reflect not only reconciliation between the heritage of antiquity and that of Christianity, but also his adoption of Aristotelianism, i.e., Thomism. A marginal comment on how many a scholar discoursing in the Cathedral taught “Aristotelian disciplines” and a quotation from *Nicomachean Ethics* are modest contributions against a deeply rooted thesis on the irreconcilability of medieval Aristotelianism and Renaissance Neoplatonism.⁹²

A word or two may also be said about the attitude towards history in these two periods. Although the Renaissance took a large step forward in the understanding of the notion of historical perspective, divorcing from the medieval view on the linear movement of history from Creation to Judgement Day, some elements still remained similar. It was the leaning on antiquity that hindered the humanistic thinker from achieving full consciousness of

⁹⁰ See Zdenka Janeković Römer, »*Pro anima mea et predecessorum meorum*: The Death and the Family in 15th Century Dubrovnik«, *Otium* 3/1-2 (1995): pp. 25-34; eadem, »Na razmeđu ovog i onog svijeta. Prožimanje pojavnog i transcendentnog u dubrovačkim oporukama kasnoga srednjeg vijeka«, *Otium* 2/3-4 (1994): pp. 3-16.

⁹¹ F. de Diversis, »Oratio in funere Sigismundi imperatoris«: pp. 80-81; »Oratio in funere Alberti regis«: pp. 158-159.

⁹² F. de Diversis, »Oratio in funere Sigismundi imperatoris«: pp. 54-55; »Oratio in laudem Alberti regis«: pp. 96-97. Compare R. Tuck, »Humanism and Political Thought«: pp. 51-57; Lj. Schiffler, *Humanizam bez granica*: pp. 24-25. Ivan Božić argues against this view. I. Božić, »Pojava humanizma u Dubrovniku«: p. 10.

historical change: they believed their time to be a direct continuity of antiquity, and that is why they were unable to realize their own idea of historical perspective and, paradoxically, with it, if only partly, they inherited the medieval anachronistic experience of history.⁹³ Examples of this may be found in the series of ahistorical comparisons Diversi resorted to, but also in the definition of history drawn from Aristotle's *Poetics*. By the notion *historia* he understands history as a story, knowledge of particular value, and not something that interprets, as rhetoric or philosophical knowledge. *Antiqui historiarum scriptores* proved welcome with their illustrations from the lives of ancient heroes, serving as source for his rhetoric creation.⁹⁴ Without going any deeper into the analysis, I would like to note that the humanistic orators also leaned on some principles of medieval preaching practice, particularly when persuading or convincing was concerned. Medieval speeches or sermons had a different purpose and thus different ornament, although their *formulae oratoriae* were also derived from Ciceronian rhetoric.⁹⁵ The humanists, notably the early ones, experienced their movement as a clean cut which divorced them from the Middle Ages, but this prejudice should most certainly be abandoned as these two worlds were connected by more bridges than one.

Diversi's audience in the Cathedral

To what extent Diversi's humanistic phrases and allusions appealed to the heterogeneous audience is hard to say. As mentioned earlier, the first

⁹³ The Renaissance failed to historicize its perspective on history. Neither was the latter awarded the place it deserved among the sciences. However, the Renaissance was to open the door to these perspectives primarily through its attitude towards the sources. Devotion to antiquity promoted the historical memory despite the fact that the critical devices of the sources were still unable to respond. On medieval and humanistic historiography, see Mirjana Gross, *Suvremena historiografija*. Zagreb: Novi Liber, 1996: pp. 35-45, 54-67.

⁹⁴ F. de Diversis, »Oratio in funere Sigismundi imperatoris«: pp. 68-69; »Oratio in laudem Alberti regis«: pp. 100-101, 108-109.

⁹⁵ J. Burckhardt, *Kultura renesanse u Italiji*: pp. 208-211; Simon Tugwell, »De huiusmodi sermonibus textitur omnis recta predicatio: Changing attitudes towards the Word of God«, in: *De l'homélie au sermon: Histoire de la prédication médiévale*. Louvain-la-Neuve: Publications de l'Institut d'études médiévales, Université Catholique de Louvain, 1993: pp. 159-168; David L. d'Avray, »The Comparative Study of Memorial Preaching«, in: *Modern Questions about Medieval Sermons: Essays on Marriage, Death, History and Sanctity*, ed. Nicole Bévion and David L. d'Avray. [Biblioteca di medioevo latino, vol. 11]. Spoleto: Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo, 1994: pp. 175-193.

half of the fifteenth century marked the existence of a significant humanistic circle in Dubrovnik, which included distinguished foreigners, Ragusan patricians, and a few citizens. But the likelihood is that the commoners who attended the memorial services and ceremonies in the Cathedral tended to show greater interest in details other than the display of learning and elegant verbosity of the honourable orator. This was particularly true of the female part of the audience, not only because of the educational inequality but because they made rare appearances in public, so that events such as these had more of a social than an intellectual appeal.⁹⁶ The orations were part of the overall decorum, but it is most certain that at least half of the listeners gathered were quite incompetent in classical Latinism to be able to grasp the allusions, let alone value them in the manner the orator anticipated. At the same time, however, Diversi addressed a highly qualified audience of orators-diplomats, some of whom must have been more versed in pragmatic verbosity and grandiloquence than he himself. Public life, that of politics primarily, required able speakers who, by means of words, would attain an aesthetic but a real effect as well. The council sessions often witnessed remarkable displays of patrician erudition and wordiness absorbed from the Ancients. Classical rhetoric forms were applied in diplomacy - aesthetic value, competence, and persuasiveness of the rhetorical structure contributed to the realization of the policy and ideology of the Ragusan patriciate. The art of ceremonial oratory, but also the effectiveness of argumentation, won them the attribute of *oratores*. In Diversi's day the noble orators were already highly reputed for their masterly diplomatic communication, of which the public was fully aware. Among others, the famous merchant and diplomat Benedikt Kotruljević also emphasized the importance of rhetoric in public service: "There are those who have been sent as envoys to the counts, noblemen or authority, but incompetent in both literature and rhetoric, they are like donkeys holding a lyre, or half-men, animals still".⁹⁷ Among the patricians Diversi mentions is Marinus Michaelis de Resti, who, at the time, enjoyed the reputation of an able diplomat but also an admirer of antiquity and an able orator. The chronicles describe his mission to Ancona where he exchanged humanistic eulogies with Ciriaco de Pizzicolti. They both delivered most excellent orations,

⁹⁶ Zdenka Janeković Römer, *Rod i grad. Dubrovačka obitelj od XIII. do XV. stoljeća*. Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU, 1994: pp. 126-130; Z. Janeković Römer, *Okvir slobode*: pp. 194-196, 207-208.

⁹⁷ B. Kotruljević, *O trgovini i savršenom trgovcu*: p. 319.

evoking glorious Roman reminiscences and the ancient origin of the two towns, their freedom, contemporary material and spiritual flourishing, followed by what they actually came to settle - a contract on free maritime trade and transport.⁹⁸ Fifteenth-century instructions and letters to the envoys and rulers were adorned with figures of the classical topos, replacing the biblical quotations of the older charters. The parchment documents and codices witnessed Virgil's Trojans, gods, and mythical beings, even horses as *quadrupedantes*. The property inventories and wills show an impressive variety of classical reading: the works of Cicero, Livy, Pliny, Herodotus, Xenophon, Polibius, Plutarch, Aristotle, Plato, Euclid, Homer, and Hesiodus, along with those of humanistic authors. The present was under the strong influence of the ancient world, from name forms to different social occasions, public offices or ceremony.⁹⁹ Diversi thus addressed a most colourful audience, whose response we can only imagine. Although no direct evidence on the reception is available, it remains just as significant.

Voices from the fifteenth century

Early humanism, the period to which Diversi belonged, is what sixteenth-century humanists referred to as the golden age. It was the time of enthusiasm for the discovery and publication of classic Latin writings, the influence of Cicero and Roman art, the search for an ancient heritage and the pursuit of *studia humanitatis* - grammar, rhetoric, ethics, poetry, music, and history. This enthusiastic belief in the importance and possibility of the cultural revival of the classical paragons lived through the sixteenth century as well. I would say that the intellectual anxiety, the inquisitiveness of the Western mind, is one of the essential and living qualities of humanism. The renaissance fifteenth century was similar to its model, particularly the Roman republic, in the understanding of the ideal of civil action through policy, but through productive art as well. Humanistic love for antiquity as an ideal model streamed the artists away from original creativity. Their aim was to gather as much information on the "model era" and try to imitate it to the best of

⁹⁸ G. Praga, »Indagini e studi sul umanesimo in Dalmazia«: pp. 263-280; Z. Janeković Römer, *Okvir slobode*: p. 92; P. Matković, »Trgovački odnošaji između Dubrovnika i srednje Italije«. *Rad JAZU* 15 (1871): pp. 35-40.

⁹⁹ Z. Janeković Römer, *Okvir slobode*: pp. 91-92; I. Božić, »Pojava humanizma u Dubrovniku«: pp. 12-13. SAD, *Testamenta notariae*, ser. 10.1, vol. 28, ff. 160v-166r.

their abilities. Virtually, it was an attempt towards the revival of the content, expression, and form of classical Roman writings, possibly in the manner of Cicero's prose. Such an "aesthetic of the sameness" was dominant in western literature until as late as the end of the eighteenth century.¹⁰⁰ From the modern perspective of tradition, it would be erroneous, however, to assert that the humanists were no more than mimics, antique lovers, and foremost erudites who produced nothing essentially new. In their attempt to reach the raw model of the Ancients as much as possible, the humanists, no doubt, lost a considerable share of spontaneity and personal feeling. This defect should be viewed in the context of the time and style, and understood as a general attitude which did not cultivate an orthodoxy of originality, but one of imitation. Commonplaces which reappear monotonously in diverse literary genres are not the result of the author's uninventiveness but an idea that knowledge has to be articulated and shared, for only then does it become live and active. Patterning after the classical ideal of active life, the humanists became well aware of the need for practical knowledge and the reform of schools and education which, through the fine arts, was to ennoble the lives of many. In addition, they created a new cultural ideal and lifestyle, sowing the seed of the profound urge for beauty and leaving it for generations to inherit.

Contrary to the modernistic credo of "divorcing from the past and turning to the bright future", the Renaissance was capable of understanding its reality, having constructed it on the past. That is why the Renaissance feels close to our age in its endeavour to establish a new past-present relationship, observing that the future cannot be without history. Post-modern rethinking of the interrelatedness of rhetoric, linguistics, literature, history, and other disciplines has brought Renaissance thought to the fore. History is no longer a mere illustration, nor is rhetoric articulation considered contrary to historical research.¹⁰¹ One may say that a step forward has also been made in the rethinking of the relationship between humanity and speech. In antiquity

¹⁰⁰ D. Novaković, »Latinsko pjesništvo hrvatskoga humanizma«: pp. 68-69.

¹⁰¹ Compare Zdenka Janeković Römer, »O pisanju povijesti i znanju o prošlosti«, in: *Zbornik Mirjane Gross*. Zagreb: Zavod za hrvatsku povijest Filozofskog fakulteta Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, 1999: pp. 445-458; Jörn Rüsen, »Pisanje zgodovine kot teoretski problem zgodovinske vede«, in: *Zbornik Vsi Tukididovi mužje. Sodobne teorije zgodovinopisja*. Ljubljana: Knjižnica revolucionarne teorije Krt, 1990: pp. 75-93.

and humanism alike, the human ideal was epitomized in an orator, while in the post-modern age we shift our focus to dialogue. The ideal is no longer restricted to scholarship and the delight it brings, but to the process of communication as well. Man cannot be complete without the voice of the other. It is a voice from the past, in this case that of Philip Diversi speaking about his own time, providing answers to some of our questions. Thus rhetoric and discourse, in a continuous dialogue with the past, promote themselves as genuine historical sources, with the evidence being hidden in both the structure and the texture.